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THE TRUE WITNESS AND CATHOLIC CHRONICLE.

MONTREAL, FRIDAY, MARCH 31, 1854.

On account of some changes in the Programme of the St. Patrick's Society's Grand Soirée announced for the 18th next—we did not receive the Society's advertisement in sufficient time for publication in this week's issue. It shall appear in our next.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

The Africa brings dates up to the 11th instant.—Little had been done in Parliament. The Committee to inquire into the alleged corruption of Irish Members, was still engaged in the examination of witnesses, but had elicited nothing of great importance.—Mr. Bowyer had given notice of a motion—that the order for Mr. Chambers' Nunnery Committee be discharged; and every opposition to the proceedings of the Committee will be offered in every stage of its proceedings. We are happy to say that a general, and intense feeling of disgust and indignation has been excited throughout the Catholic population of Great Britain and Ireland, at this fresh outrage upon the religious liberties of Catholics. A public meeting of the Catholics of England had been summoned for the 21st of the month, and another in Dublin of the Irish Catholics.

The Baltic fleet was ready for sea, and was expected to sail on the 12th; on the previous Saturday, Her Majesty intended to review the fleet at Spithead. The embarkation of troops still continues; and everything indicates the determination of the Government to prosecute the war vigorously.

To meet the expenses of the war the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposes to double the Income Tax; a proposition which will not prove very acceptable to the Irish. The French Legislature has agreed to a Loan of £10,000,000 for the same purpose; and Louis Napoleon declares his intention of making Russia pay all the expenses of the war. This seems the better system of finance.

From the Continent, we have little of importance. The report of the fall of Kalafat is formally contradicted, but an attack was daily expected. In France, the warlike enthusiasm of the people responds heartily to the appeals of the Emperor, and but one spirit seems to animate the whole nation. Austria has published a Manifesto, which is looked upon as satisfactory by the Western Powers, who have guaranteed the tranquillity of Austria's Italian possessions. Prussia still wavers, but will most likely ultimately side with the West. In Greece, the insurrection still continues, but is not so formidable as was at first anticipated. There are rumors of a misunderstanding between the British and Spanish Governments.

We may expect to hear of warm work in the Baltic ere long. The Russian fleet is said to be pushing out of the ice, and making every exertion to get to sea. Sir Charles Napier will, no doubt, give a good account of them, if he have the good luck to come across them. We have no intelligence of any important naval operations in the Black Sea.

In calling the attention of the Irish Catholics of Montreal, to the unfinished state of the St. Patrick's church, and whilst impressing on them the necessity for the application of a prompt and efficacious remedy, the Rev. Mr. Connolly took occasion to observe, that the Irish of Montreal had done a good deal for others, but not much for themselves; and that, whilst it was far from his intention to blame them for so doing, or to withhold from them the praise due to their liberality towards strangers, still, it was his duty to tell them that charily, properly understood, should begin at home; and that, therefore, he would advise them, until the more pressing wants of their own church were provided for, to devote their subscriptions to purposes immediately connected with the interests of that church, of which they were strictly speaking, the congregation; and which, in its unfinished and neglected state, had so many legitimate demands upon their sympathies, both as Irish Catholics, and as citizens of Montreal. This advice from the reverend pastor of St. Patrick's is worthy of serious attention; and as it is in contemplation to appeal to all the Catholic citizens of Montreal, for the purpose of carrying out another project, which intimately concerns both the pecuniary and religious interests of Catholics of all origins, it will not be out of place to say a few words upon the subject to which we shortly alluded last week, when treating of the new burial ground, and of the different schemes that have been propounded for enabling the Fabrique to comply with the requisitions of the municipal laws respecting interments.

And in so doing, it is necessary to advert to the relative positions of the Seminary, and Fabrique, of

Montreal; as these are the two parties most directly concerned in the projected arrangements; the first, as charged with the spiritual, the other, as guardian of the pecuniary, interests of the parish of Montreal; and both being, we are well aware, actuated by a laudable desire to promote the interests, spiritual and material, of their parishioners and fellow-citizens. Still, we see every day, that men, having but one object, and honestly intent upon carrying it into execution, differ as to the means to be employed. It is so in this instance; some of our citizens being in favor of one, some inclined to adopt the other, of the two plans to which we alluded last week.

Now the Fabrique is at this moment deeply indebted. Its liabilities amount to something like the sum of £84,000, upon £60,000, of which interest is charged. This interest is defrayed by the rents accruing from the lease of pews in the Parish, and St. Patrick's, churches, and some other sources of revenue, which, however, are barely sufficient for the purpose; so that it sometimes happens that the Seminary—a perfectly distinct Corporation—is obliged to come forward to enable the Fabrique to meet its engagements. We may add that the Fabrique is indebted to the Seminary in the sum of £50,000, or thereabouts.

Under these circumstances it is evident that it is the interest of both parties—of the Seminary the creditor, and of the Fabrique, the debtor—to avoid as much as possible the contracting of any additional debts. Should it be asked—how have these debts been contracted?—it is sufficient to point to the Parish and St. Patrick's churches, both of which have been, for the most part, built at the cost of the Fabrique. It is no reproach to that body that it is in debt; for its debts have been contracted in the interests of all classes of the parishioners—of the Irish, as well as of the French Canadians.

Such being the relative positions of the Seminary and the Fabrique, and both being thus interested in avoiding all unnecessary expenditure, the former, as soon as it became evident that it was indispensably necessary to make arrangements for obtaining a new burial ground for the Catholic citizens of Montreal—made the following very liberal, and to the citizens, highly advantageous proposal.

The Seminary offered a piece of ground of about 20 acres, situated at the *Coteau St. Luc*, in the immediate vicinity of their newly finished church, for a burying ground for ever; the Fabrique were to have the use of it gratuitously; and as it is already fenced in, no expenses whatever are required for fitting it for its destination. This lot of 20 acres would serve the citizens of the western portion of the city; but would perhaps be inconveniently remote, for that portion of the population which is contained within the Quebec suburbs. To obviate this inconvenience, it was proposed by the Seminary to give within a short distance of the Quebec toll gate, another piece of ground for the purpose of interments; so that in all, by accepting the proposal of the Seminary, the Fabrique would acquire, gratuitously, about 30 acres of ground; a quantity, amply sufficient, as experience has shown us, to meet the wants of the citizens of Montreal for upwards of a century at least; besides placing a burial ground within easy access of the inhabitants of both extremes of the city; and, at the same time, imposing upon them no additional expenses for the burial of their dead. This was the proposal of the Seminary; to which, if the Fabrique be willing to accept it, it still adheres.

A majority of the Fabrique, and many of our citizens however, seemed inclined to think that the ground offered by the Seminary was too limited in extent, for our numerous, and rapidly increasing population; and that it would therefore be more advisable to purchase, at once, a piece of ground, of the requisite dimensions, and which, from its size, would guarantee the Catholics of Montreal against the inconvenience of having, at any subsequent period, to change their cemetery, or disturb the ashes of their dead. These were the motives which induced the Fabrique to hesitate about accepting the Seminary's offer; and to adopt the resolution of purchasing a piece of land of adequate dimensions.

The Seminary replied—that they had no wish to thwart the Fabrique—that they had no desire to oppose any obstacles to the wishes of their fellow-citizens—and that therefore they would accede to the proposal of the Fabrique upon two conditions:—

First—that the site selected should be adapted for the end proposed—that of furnishing the Catholics of Montreal with a suitable place of interment.

Secondly—that, since the Seminary could neither furnish the funds required for this purchase, nor consent to the Fabrique incurring additional debt, the purchase money, and the sums requisite for putting the site when purchased, in proper order, should be raised by the Fabrique, by means of voluntary contributions from amongst the citizens. A sum, we have been informed, not far short of £10,000 will be required for this purpose; and already a subscription list has been opened, in which many wealthy gentlemen have enrolled their names for considerable amounts. Still, but a small portion of the required sum has, as yet, been obtained; and as the Irish of Montreal form a very considerable portion of the Catholic population, it is naturally to be expected that they also will be asked for their contributions.

Candidly, we do not think that the Fabrique will get much from the St. Patrick's congregation. They have many and heavy, demands upon them; they are, generally, averse to any unnecessary expenditure; and at the present moment have something else to do with their money—in providing for their own immediate wants—besides laying it out in an attempt to compete with the Protestant cemetery. Besides, Paddy is at heart a Papist; he likes to lay the bones of his departed friends and relatives, beneath the shadow of the Church, where he can meekly offer up his prayer

for the repose of the departed soul, and over which comes stealing the hallowed sounds of the church-going bell, summoning the living to assist at that adorable sacrifice at which, by the living, commemoration is still made of the dead. This no doubt may appear but idle superstition to men of liberal and progressive views; but still it is a superstition coeval with Christianity; a superstition which as Catholics we should be loth to see dispelled.

It may be proper to remark here, that, at a late meeting of the Fabrique, it was determined to purchase a lot of land of about 120 acres, known as Dr. Beaubien's farm, near the *Cote des Neiges*, for a Catholic burial ground—that His Lordship the Bishop of Montreal, always desirous of acceding to the reasonable wishes of his flock, signified his acquiescence; and that the Superior of the Seminary—as a member of the Fabrique—offered no opposition to what he conceived to be the decided opinion of the majority of the citizens, speaking through their representatives. The treaty was accordingly entered into with Dr. Beaubien, and the purchase deeds signed; the sum demanded for the land being about £3,000—to which must also be added another very large sum, for laying out the grounds, fencing, and other unavoidable expenses, ere it can be fitted for its proposed destination. As we said before, it has been calculated that the whole cost will not be much under £10,000; all of which must be raised by voluntary contributions from amongst the people.

But though the consent of His Lordship, and of the Seminary, has been obtained to the scheme of the Fabrique—and though the contract with Dr. Beaubien has been signed, it does not follow that the lot of land so purchased must inevitably be devoted to the purposes of a cemetery; or that the proposal of the Seminary, should be rejected as unworthy of further consideration. No doubt, if ultimately the Fabrique should feel inclined to close with that proposal, it could easily find means to dispose of its purchase, certainly without loss, perhaps at a profit. And in the mean time, it is but proper that the opinions of the Irish of Montreal should be consulted on a matter so nearly affecting their interests, as citizens and as Catholics. Surely the Irish, forming nearly one third of the Catholic population, are well entitled to have a voice in the question of how to dispose of the remains of their dead. It is for the purpose of calling their serious attention to this important question, that we have entered into the above somewhat prosy details.

The question of the site for the new burying ground, may therefore be considered as yet undecided: for, in the first place, the sum required has not been, and we do not think will be easily, raised; in the second place, Dr. Beaubien's farm, though it has much to recommend it, is not, in many respects, suited for a decent burial ground. It has several very serious draw-backs: amongst which we may mention—1st, the rocky nature of the soil, rendering it difficult, if not impossible, in many places, to dig down to the requisite depth—2nd, the number of springs bursting out in every direction, as soon as the soil is opened. We speak not from any personal knowledge, and therefore with diffidence. But we have been informed by persons of the highest respectability, and possessed of considerable local knowledge, that, in consequence of these two defects, a great part of the 120 acres in Dr. Beaubien's farm, is perfectly useless for the purpose of a burying ground. These objections might indeed be overcome by blasting, and, by a system of thorough draining; but this would of course entail another very heavy outlay. The site is also of difficult access during the winter months.

Upon the whole, then, it would seem that the Catholics of Montreal would do well by accepting the liberal offer of the Seminary; and this without any prejudice to the Fabrique, whose arguments in favor of Dr. Beaubien's picturesque farm, are certainly not destitute of weight. The advantages in favor of the plan proposed by the Seminary are these:—

First—By accepting it, the Catholics of Montreal would acquire *free of expense*, two burial grounds; both together, amply sufficient for all their wants, for many, many generations.—Whereas, the plan of the Fabrique necessitates a very large expenditure, both for the original purchase of the land, and for the putting of it in proper order.

Secondly—By adopting the Seminary's plan—and this we think the more important consideration—Catholics will have the satisfaction of laying their departed friends—and of knowing that their own bodies will one day be laid to sleep their last sleep—within the precincts of the Churchyard; where, weekly, thousands will gather as they go up to the House of God to worship, to shed the tear of affection, and to offer up the fervent prayer, over the grave, and for the repose, of those who sleep in Christ, in hopes of the glorious resurrection of the bodies now mouldering in the dust. Trees and flowers, and spruce gravel walks—disconsolate Niobes, weeping Nymphs, Winged Victories in stucco, and quaint allegories in plaster of Paris—are no doubt very pretty, and may be quite in keeping with Pagan or Protestant cemeteries; but are hardly to be considered as the necessary decorations of an old fashioned, Christian burial-ground. We confess it—for we are Papists, and therefore superstitious—we would rather have a plain wooden cross at the head of our grave, or a stone with the simple inscription—"Here lies—pray for me"—than all the pompous, and semi-heathen embellishments of a modern cemetery. These may attract the wondering gaze of the idle pleasure seeker; the other will call forth the Christian's prayer—the "Hail Mary"—and the heart felt ejaculation—"may his soul through the mercy of God repose in peace." These are the sights we wish to see, these the sounds we still wish to hear, in those hallowed enclosures, where lie the remains of our departed

friends; and these we may be sure will be more frequent, in the Catholic "Churchyard," and beneath the shade of the Church's walls. Will not too, that sacred pile, by its solemn associations, protect our burying grounds from these profanations to which remote cemeteries are too often exposed?—profanations to which decency forbids us more particularly to allude.

The desire to outlive our separated brethren, in the taste and elegance of our cemetery, is no doubt, in many respects, very laudable; but why should we depart from the customs, prejudices—superstitions if you will—of our Catholic ancestors? Let our separated brethren bury their dead as they list; we force not our opinions on them, and we see not why we should be expected to adopt theirs. We are Christians—Catholic Christians—and have therefore very different ideas respecting the duties which the living owe to the dead; that therefore which may be well adapted to the ideas of Protestantism, will almost always be sadly at variance with the promptings of the Catholic heart, and the requirements of the Catholic religion. Let the Protestants bury their dead after their fashion, and Catholics, after the fashion of Catholics. Let there be no rivalry betwixt us; and if Protestants can boast that their's is the more beautiful and costly cemetery, let it be enough for us to thank God that our's is the more Christian.

It is intended to hold a meeting of the members of St. Patrick's church after Mass on Sunday next, to take into consideration the unfinished state of the church, and to concert the necessary measures for applying a remedy. Amongst the other improvements recommended by the Rev. Mr. Connolly, to his congregation, is the taking immediate steps for purchasing a new organ, the one at present in use being much too small for such a large building as the St. Patrick's church. Good music is, if not an essential, yet of considerable importance, in religious worship, both as an aid to devotion, and as giving additional interest and beauty to the solemn offices of the Church. Thus, from the earliest ages of Christianity, we see that the attention of Popes and Bishops has been directed to the subject of Church music: whilst the genius of her children has been devoted to the same laudable ends. It is a principle of Catholicity that, with every faculty with which God has endowed us, we should serve Him; that with our lips and our bodies, as well as in our hearts, we should worship Him: and that the noblest use to which the artist, the sculptor, the painter, the architect, the poet, or the musician, can dedicate the talents which God has been pleased to bestow on him, is, the service of his Creator, the adornment of His holy temples, and the worship of His Most Holy Name. Thus, in the Church, the Arts and Sciences have each their allotted place: each in turn becomes the handmaid of religion.

And if we have music in our religious services, at all, we should have it of the best. But to have good music, we must have good instruments, good voices, and a well drilled, and well appointed body of singers. Now, what we stand in need of at St. Patrick's church at the present moment, is, a good organ, without which we need never expect an effective choir. The first expense will be heavy no doubt: but it is confidently expected that, when this want is fairly represented to them, the St. Patrick's congregation—which has ever shown itself prompt to respond to the demands for assistance from the Bishops, the Clergy, and people of other dioceses, and which has so often taxed itself for the erecting of churches, and asylums, in all parts of Canada and the United States—will prove itself as ready to incur the expenses necessary for making the temple dedicated to their Patron Saint, worthy of their city, and of themselves: a church, in fact, of which the Irish Catholics of Montreal may feel proud, and which they may hand down to their posterity, as a proof of their attachment to the land, and to the religion, of St. Patrick.

The Montreal Witness contests the truth of our assertion that, in their Pastoral Letters upon the subject of "Table Turning" and "Spiritual Rappings," the Catholic Prelates of Canada had not undertaken to pronounce authoritatively as to the nature and causes of the phenomena; contenting themselves with condemning the mischiefs, and superstitious practices which accrue from these experiments. Our contemporary thinks to confound us by a garbled extract from the Pastoral of the Archbishop of Quebec; had he read the contents attentively, he would have seen that the TRUE WITNESS was perfectly correct in its statements.

After showing that the phenomena in question were not attributable to the spirits in bliss, nor yet to the souls of the faithful detained in Purgatory; His Grace concluded that, if spiritual, the demonstrations in question could only be diabolically, spiritual. He recognised the fact, taught by the Church in her Offices for Exorcism, that there have been, and may be again, diabolical influences at work amongst the children of men; that, if the Holy Scriptures be true, there have been, and may be again, cases of diabolical possession; but, added His Grace, since the victory of the Cross, the power of the Evil one has been much curtailed; rarely is it in his power to exercise it, and then, only over the wicked, who willingly yield to his assaults, and by consenting to do his work put themselves in his power. Though asserting the rarity, His Grace still admits the possibility, of diabolical possession.

Then adds His Grace—we must conclude that the various phenomena alluded to, and produced—"by us know not what agent," proceed, "not from the souls of the departed, the angels of God, nor even probability—*ni neme probabement*—from the angels of Tartarus; but are only the products of your heated